

A long, long time ago a woman named Mary lived in the town of Nazareth. She was a good girl and she made God very proud. She was engaged to marry a man named Joseph.

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One day an angel came to Mary and told her not to be afraid but that she was to give birth to a baby boy. She was told he would be the son of God and she was to name him Jesus.

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Mary was confused by the news of this baby boy because she was not yet married to Joseph. She was told that He would be born from the Holy Spirit and that He would rule heaven and earth, forever.

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She didn't understand how this miracle would happen but she trusted God completely so she accepted the task with ultimate faith.

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The angel even tried to prove God's promise to her by informing Mary that her cousin, Elizabeth, who was too old to have a baby, was in fact, with child. Mary discovered this to be true and knew that her baby Jesus was God's will.

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Joseph soon discovered the news of Mary's pregnancy and was confused and upset because he knew he was not the father. He was visited by an angel, though, who told him not to be afraid and that the baby was from the Holy Spirit.

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Like Mary, Joseph loved and trusted God very much so he believed the angel. He chose to support Mary in complete faith in the Lord.

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In those days, people were required to return to their home town to register their name in a census so that proper taxes could be paid. Therefore, Joseph and Mary began the long journey to Bethlehem because that is where Joseph was from.

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It was a long journey for them as they had to travel mostly by foot. Some people had donkeys to help carry things. They had to move slowly, though, as Mary was pregnant.

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When they arrived, the shelters were all full. The inns keepers all exclaimed, "No room!" This didn't stop Mary and Joseph from finding shelter. They settled in an animal's stable and made a bed for Jesus from a manger that the animals ate from.

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Mary gave birth to the King, baby Jesus and swaddled him in cloth. One can only imagine what it must have been like for Mary to be holding her baby, the Savior of the world.

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Angels told all of the nearby shepherds the good news of his birth and they sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and peace to everyone on earth."

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Hearing the angels worship, the shepherds went to the stable in Bethlehem to see if what they were saying was true. When they arrived at the stable, they found Joseph, Mary and baby Jesus in the manger, just like the angels had said.

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Meanwhile, there were wise men off in the distance that noticed there was a new star in the sky. They knew that whenever a new star appeared, it meant a new king had been born.

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They began to follow the star and when they arrived in Jerusalem, they asked if anyone knew where this new king was. Herod, the king of Judea, heard this and immediately became jealous.

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Herod told the wise men to find out where this new king was. They were to report back with his exact location. He lied and said it was because he wanted to worship Him, but Herod really wanted to kill him.

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The wise men didn't know Herod's real intentions, so they continued on their journey to find Jesus. They followed the star to Mary, Joseph and Jesus. The wise men brought gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh and worshipped Jesus.

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God spoke to the wise men in a dream and told them not to go back to Herod. They trusted God and were obedient, so they did not.

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When Herod heard that the wise men were not returning with the information on where Jesus was, he was furious. He wanted Jesus dead.

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To try and ensure Jesus' death, Herod ordered his men to kill all boys aged two and younger that were living in Bethlehem in the surrounding areas.

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What Herod didn't realize is that an angel had already visited Joseph and told him to leave take Mary and Jesus and leave Bethlehem immediately. He obeyed and took them to Egypt where they were safe.

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In time, Herod passed away. Angels came to Joseph again and told him that they could return to Bethlehem because it was now safe. Those that were trying to kill him were gone.

22

As Joseph, Mary, and Jesus were heading back to Egypt, they heard that Herod's son was now the king. They did not feel safe going back there so they returned to the town on Nazareth and lived there.

23

They continued to reside in Nazareth, giving truth to the prophets who said, "He will be called a Nazarene."

Every December 25, Christians all over the world celebrate this miraculous story of the birth of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

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